

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1415

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4581.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SECURING DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FIREARMS ACT OF 2017

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4433) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to achieve security of sensitive assets among the components of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4433

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Securing Department of Homeland Security Firearms Act of 2017” or the “Securing DHS Firearms Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means the Department of Homeland Security.

(2) LOST.—The term “lost” includes loss by theft.

(3) SENSITIVE ASSETS.—The term “sensitive assets” means any asset, regardless of value—

(A) that the Department of Homeland Security issues to a Department employee; and

(B) that either the Under Secretary for Management of the Department or a component head determines requires special control and accounting.

(4) UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT.—The term “Under Secretary for Management” means the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security.

SEC. 3. INCLUSION OF SECURING FIREARMS AND OTHER SENSITIVE ASSETS IN RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT.

Section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(6), by inserting “(including firearms and other sensitive assets)” after “equipment”;

(2) by redesignating the second subsection (e) (relating to the definition of interoperable communications) as subsection (f); and

(3) by amending such redesignated subsection (f) to read as follows:

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS.—The term ‘interoperable communications’ has the meaning given such term in section 7303(g) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (6 U.S.C. 194(g)).

“(2) SENSITIVE ASSETS.—The term ‘sensitive assets’ means any asset, regardless of value—

(A) that the Department of Homeland Security issues to a Department employee; and

(B) that either the Under Secretary for Management of the Department or a component head determines requires special control and accounting.”.

SEC. 4. MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE.

(a) SAFEGUARDING FIREARMS AND SENSITIVE ASSETS DIRECTIVE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary for Management shall develop and disseminate a Department-wide directive for achieving adequate security over firearms and other sensitive assets across the Department.

(2) CONTENTS.—The directive required under subsection (a) shall, at a minimum, include the following:

(A) Descriptions of what equipment, in addition to firearms, is classified as a sensitive asset for the purpose of carrying out this Act.

(B) Requirements for securing Department-issued firearms and other sensitive assets.

(C) A classification system for all categories of Department-issued badges and corresponding requirements for safeguarding such assets.

(D) Reporting requirements for lost firearms and other sensitive assets, including timelines for such reporting, to supervisors, local law enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s National Crime Information Center, and Department headquarters.

(E) Recordkeeping requirements for lost firearms and other sensitive assets in inventory systems, including a timeline for recording such losses.

(3) REVIEW AND UPDATE OF DIRECTIVE.—Not later than one year after the issuance of the directive required under subsection (a) the Under Secretary for Management shall review and update, as necessary, such directive, including adding a requirement relating to recording in the inventory systems maintained by each component of the Department the acceptance or transfer of a firearm or other sensitive asset by such component.

(b) PERSONAL PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL.—Together with the issuance of the directive pursuant to subsection (a), the Under Secretary for Management shall disseminate a revised version of the Personal Property Asset Management Program Manual that includes the following:

(1) Requirements for component heads to develop procedures to safeguard firearms and other sensitive assets during on and off-duty time.

(2) Requirements for the issuance of safety locking devices and policies on the use of such assets, as applicable.

(3) Requirements for initial, recurrent, and remedial training on safeguarding such assets.

(4) Examples, with detail, of how to report and record lost sensitive assets across components of the Department, and an enforcement mechanism to ensure supervisors maintain such records.

(5) A requirement that the file maintained on a lost firearm or other sensitive asset

contains both the corresponding police report and the Department report detailing the circumstances surrounding such loss, including information on adherence to safeguarding procedures.

SEC. 5. COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES.

Department component heads shall—

(1) comply with Federal law, Federal regulations, executive branch guidance, and Department policy, including directives required by this Act, relating to the management and oversight of securing firearms and other sensitive assets;

(2) review the need for non-law enforcement badges;

(3) require component personnel to safeguard firearms and other sensitive assets in accordance with the directive issued by the Under Secretary for Management under section 4;

(4) require that component personnel adhere to the procedures and timelines for properly reporting to supervisors lost firearms and other sensitive assets;

(5) require that lost firearms and other sensitive assets are reported to local law enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s National Crime Information Center, and Department headquarters in the timeframe established in such directive; and

(6) require that lost firearms and other sensitive assets are recorded in inventory systems in the timeframe established by such directive.

SEC. 6. INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.

The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall, on an ongoing basis, review implementation of this Act and, not later than 180 days after issuance of the directive under section 4, submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a review of the progress and effectiveness of such directive, including an assessment of the adequacy of such directive, as well as the level of compliance among the components of the Department to achieve adequate security of sensitive assets across Department components.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) and the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4433, the Securing Department of Homeland Security Firearms Act of 2017.

A recent report by the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, entitled, “DHS’ Controls Over Firearms and Other Sensitive Assets,” found that, between fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2016, personnel from DHS and its components misplaced a total of 2,142 highly sensitive assets, including 228 firearms and 1,889 badges.

DHS is charged with the safety of our Nation and its citizens. The OIG report indicates that not only are there some DHS personnel not being held accountable for failing to safeguard their sensitive assets, they are also not receiving proper training on how to properly safeguard and keep track of such equipment. Given the importance of DHS' mission, this is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

H.R. 4433 follows the OIG's recommendations and requires DHS' Under Secretary for Management to promulgate a departmentwide directive to DHS personnel aimed at achieving adequate security over DHS firearms and other sensitive assets. H.R. 4433 mandates that this directive include descriptions of what equipment is classified as a sensitive asset, requirements for securing Department-issued sensitive assets, and recordkeeping requirements for reporting lost or stolen firearms and other assets.

H.R. 4433 also requires DHS to update its Personal Property Asset Management Program Manual to include procedures and training on how to safeguard assets, both on and off duty, in accordance with the directive.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4433, the Securing Department of Homeland Security Firearms Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, DHS is a diverse Department that has the distinction of being the largest law enforcement agency in the Federal Government. To help support its critical mission, DHS must maintain and safeguard a variety of sensitive law enforcement equipment, such as firearms, ammunition, and badges. DHS equipment in the wrong hands could result in loss of life.

According to an October 2017 report issued by the DHS Office of Inspector General, the Department does not have adequate requirements to safeguard its sensitive assets. Approximately 2,100 highly sensitive assets were lost between 2014 and 2016. In response to the report, my legislation requires DHS to develop and implement policies to secure firearms and other sensitive DHS equipment at the Department.

This security measure requires the Under Secretary of Management to disseminate a departmentwide directive that includes requirements for securing firearms and sensitive DHS equipment, as well as reporting these requirements.

This measure outlines the responsibilities to properly safeguard firearms and sensitive assets in accordance with the directive and requires personnel to properly report lost firearms and equipment.

This measure was unanimously approved by the Committee on Homeland Security last month and will help foster greater accountability and security within DHS, and I urge passage of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, my legislation is intended to advance the critical mission of DHS by ensuring that firearms and sensitive assets are properly safeguarded and maintained.

In my home State of California, in 2015, a 27-year-old, Antonio Ramos, was shot and killed with an ICE agent's stolen 9-millimeter weapon.

According to the DHS OIG, failures to safeguard important equipment and assets are still not being properly addressed. Given DHS' mission, it is essential that the DHS workforce prioritize and properly protect the equipment that is critical to their mission.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I, once again, urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4433, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4433, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF IRAN TO FREE EXPRESSION

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 676) supporting the rights of the people of Iran to free expression, condemning the Iranian regime for its crackdown on legitimate protests, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 676

Whereas, on December 28, 2017, popular protests against the Iranian regime began in the city of Mashad and rapidly spread throughout the country, in the most significant anti-government protests in Iran since June 2009;

Whereas the protesters have expressed numerous economic grievances, including the regime's widespread corruption and the Revolutionary Guard Corps' control of the country's economy;

Whereas protesters have decried the regime's costly, destabilizing activities abroad, including its support for terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and the murderous Assad regime in Syria;

Whereas reports indicate that more than 1,000 Iranians have been arrested and almost two dozen killed in connection with the protests;

Whereas the Iranian regime has shut down mobile internet access and has blocked and pressured companies to cut off social media applications used by activists to organize and publicize the protests;

Whereas Congress has provided authority to license the provision of communications

technology to Iran to improve the ability of the Iranian people to speak freely;

Whereas, on January 1, 2018, regime officials threatened to crack down, with Brigadier General Esmail Kowsari of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps stating, "If this situation continues, the officials will definitely make some decisions and at that point this business will be finished.";

Whereas Congress has provided authority to designate and sanction elements of the Iranian regime involved in significant corruption and serious human rights abuses;

Whereas Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Basij militia have been sanctioned by the United States for planning and carrying out serious human rights abuses against the Iranian people, including for the cruel and prolonged torture of political dissidents;

Whereas the regime has routinely violated the human rights of Iranian citizens, including ongoing, systematic, and serious restrictions of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression, including the continuing closures of media outlets, arrests of journalists, and the censorship of expression in online forums such as blogs and websites;

Whereas the Department of State's 2016 Human Rights Report on Iran noted "severe restrictions on civil liberties, including the freedoms of assembly, association, speech, religion, and press. Other human rights problems included abuse of due process combined with use of capital punishment for crimes that do not meet the requirements of due process, as well as cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; and disregard for the physical integrity of persons, whom authorities arbitrarily and unlawfully detained, tortured, or killed.";

Whereas, on December 29, 2017, the Department of State strongly condemned the arrest of peaceful protesters and noted that "Iran's leaders have turned a wealthy country with a rich history and culture into an economically depleted rogue state whose chief exports are violence, bloodshed, and chaos.";

Whereas, on January 1, 2018, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, Boris Johnson, stated that "The UK is watching events in Iran closely. We believe that there should be meaningful debate about the legitimate and important issues the protesters are raising and we look to the Iranian authorities to permit this.";

Whereas, on January 2, 2018, the French Foreign Ministry stated that "French authorities are closely monitoring the situation in Iran. Demonstrating freely is a fundamental right. The same is true for the free movement of information. France expresses its concern over the large number of victims and arrests.";

Whereas, on January 1, 2018, a spokesman for the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "We call on the Iranian authorities to uphold and respect democratic and human rights" and "We are encouraged by the Iranian people who are bravely exercising their basic right to protest peacefully. Canada will continue to support the fundamental rights of the Iranians, including freedom of expression.";

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations, voted for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties; and

Whereas, in violation of these and other international obligations, Iranian regime officials continue to violate the fundamental human rights of the Iranian people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—